Life in the Wilderness

Term 4 Issue #7 | Friday 30 October, 2026



FROM THE PRINCIPAL

From the Principal

Belinda Arnfield

It is good to be home.

I have missed this school, and most of all I have missed the people here. The friendly faces, our traditions and the small routines that make each day feel like Wilderness. I have missed our lovely gardens too, and I am back just in time to see them blossom in spring.

As we begin Term 4, I want to express my sincere thanks to Mr Brad Snell, who so capably stepped into the role of Acting Principal during my study leave, and to every member of staff who helped the School run so smoothly while I was away. Thank you for your care, your hard work, and the way you looked after our girls and each other.

Term 3 at Wilderness was as exciting as ever, with a full program of learning and co-curricular activities. Even the holidays did not slow Wilderness down, with girls and staff participating in the Future Industries and Innovation Tour to the United States, Sony Camp in partnership with St Peter's College, the Silver Duke of Edinburgh expedition on Kangaroo Island and Rowing Camp. My thanks to everyone who made these experiences possible.

Meanwhile, my days on study leave moved a little more slowly. I had time to read, to listen, to think and to learn.

I spent much of the term in Strasbourg, a beautiful old city in France, close to the border

with Germany. I was fortunate to observe the European Parliament in session, an experience that connected closely with my studies in governance and the importance of sound decision-making, integrity and responsibility in leadership.

My learning also took me to London, where I studied finance and the latest research in education and artificial intelligence. I spent time at the Institute of Directors, the British Library and an education research conference near Hampstead Heath. These experiences offered valuable perspectives on the changing landscape of education and the importance of looking ahead as we plan for the future of our School.

It has been particularly special to return in time for the final weeks of our Year 12 girls' journey at Wilderness. Their final days at School culminated in a wonderful Valedictory Dinner last Friday evening, where we celebrated the Class of 2026 alongside their families and teachers. Each area of our community has thoughtfully farewelled our Year 12s at their own bespoke events, wishing them all the best for their futures.

This is a remarkably close cohort, whose care for one another has been evident throughout their time at Wilderness. Although I missed the Year 12 House lunches during Term 3, I was fortunate to share in the boarders' farewell and the Amaryllis breakfast, where that closeness was so apparent. I would particularly like to acknowledge our 2026 SRC, Summer, Tianney and Tam, who connected and led the cohort with warmth and real grace.

As our Year 12 girls prepare for their final examinations, I hope they approach the weeks ahead with confidence in all they have learned and achieved. Next year, many will step into something entirely new: a university course, a job, a gap year, a city or a country they are yet to know.

Being away this term reminded me of something I hope our girls will take with them. Learning does not stop when school does. I am a Principal, and I spent this term as a student again. I sat in lectures, asked questions, saw the world and felt challenged and excited. The curiosity, determination and integrity our girls have developed at Wilderness will serve them well as they navigate a rapidly changing world.

For me, coming home has been just as good as going away. I am so grateful for this experience, and I have come back full of new ideas for our School. I look forward to all that lies ahead as we finish the year and begin building towards a wonderful 2027 together.



EARLY LEARNING

In No Particular Hurry

Rebecca Williamson

Last Friday, as our Year 12s made their final walk through Wilderness, our ELC girls lined the path to farewell them. Seeing our youngest and oldest girls together, I could not help thinking about the years in between and the many people and experiences that will shape each girl's time at our School.

Term 4 always feels a little emotional. As our educators complete their projects, prepare our ELC Keepsake and write reports, we have the opportunity to reflect on each girl's growth and the unique contribution she has made to our community.

Meanwhile, the girls remain happily absorbed in their play, friendships and discoveries. They are in no particular hurry to move on, simply enjoying being three, four or five years old.

It brings me back to Belonging, Being and Becoming, the three ideas at the heart of the Early Years Learning Framework that guides our work in the ELC. Belonging and Becoming are about relationships and growth. Being is about childhood as a time to be enjoyed in its own right, not just as preparation for what comes next.

At this time of year, we are naturally drawn towards Becoming. As parents and educators, we focus on progress, readiness and what comes next. These things matter, of course they do. But Friday's farewell reminded me just how much lies ahead for our girls, and how important it is to appreciate this little moment in their childhood too.

As we approach our transitions and the ELC Christmas Concert and Graduation, I hope we can share the excitement of what is to come while also making time to simply enjoy who each girl is right now. There is so much to look forward to and already so much to be

proud of.









JUNIOR SCHOOL

Standing Shoulder to Shoulder

Liz McCarthy

On Tuesday evening, Wilderness hosted a Wait Mate information session for our own families and for parents from schools across our community. Thank you to everyone who attended and to the Wait Mate team for a thought-provoking evening.

There is growing research showing that our children face significant challenges to their wellbeing and that social media and smartphones can play a role. In The Anxious Generation, Jonathan Haidt describes "the great rewiring of childhood". Since the early 2010s, as childhood has shifted from play-based to phone-based, we have seen a marked rise in anxiety and depression among young people.

Haidt calls this a collective action problem. Most parents have doubts about giving a young child a smartphone, yet standing firm alone against "but everyone else has one" is genuinely hard. It becomes so much easier when we stand shoulder to shoulder. When families in a year group agree to wait together, no child is left out and waiting becomes the collective choice rather than the isolating one.

Schools cannot do this alone, so I warmly invite you to work in partnership with us. Talk with the families in your daughter's year group and join Wait Mate together at sa.waitmate.org.au.

Childhood is short, and it is worth protecting. Let us give our girls the gift of time: time to play, to be bored, to build friendships and to grow up at the pace childhood was always meant to have.

None of us can do this alone. Together, we can.

Reception Assembly

This week, our Reception girls presented a wonderful assembly item, sharing what they have enjoyed most about their first year of school. They spoke with such confidence and joy, and it was a delight to hear their reflections on the friendships, learning and adventures that have filled their year. The girls made us all so proud. Thank you to our Reception teachers, Mrs Menzies and Miss Thiele, for preparing them so beautifully.

Years 3–6 Swimming Carnival

I wish to express my gratitude for the patience, support and good humour that was exhibited by our Wilderness community as we navigated what was quite a memorable way to conclude our Swimming Carnival, with a power outage at the Adelaide Aquatic Centre! The girls all followed instructions beautifully and this was only enhanced by the calm that our staff and parent community brought to those moments. It was lovely to see everyone taking very good care of one another. As much as we wouldn't have chosen and couldn't have predicted ending our day in this manner, the Carnival itself was a great success up until that point. This will stand out as not only memorable, but as yet another occasion where I feel truly proud of our Wilderness community.

Conclusion

As we move further into Term 4 and engage in all it brings, including camps, excursions, musicals, New Girls Day and our usual classroom learning, I encourage the girls to be gentle on themselves and each other. Activity and novel experiences bring enthusiasm and excitement, but also a level of tiredness. Taking care of one another so we finish the year together well will be an ongoing focus in our Junior School. I look forward to seeing you at our many upcoming events in the coming weeks.



MIDDLE SCHOOL

Excellence Across the Middle School

Rhiannon Giles

Walk of Honour: Celebrating Tradition and Community

Last week, our School community came together for the cherished Year 12 Walk of Honour, celebrating our graduating students and marking the conclusion of their Wilderness journey.

A highlight of the event was the many thoughtful gestures shared by students across year levels. True to the spirit of the occasion, gifts reflected the values of connection, gratitude and community that underpin this longstanding Wilderness tradition. Handmade tokens, heartfelt notes and simple acts of kindness served as meaningful reminders that thoughtfulness and personal connection are far more significant than material value.

Our Year 7 students once again played an important role by presenting their handmade bags and a single rose supplied by the School. These gifts symbolised the care and respect that younger students hold for their Year 12 peers and added to the warmth and significance of the celebration.

The Walk of Honour was a memorable occasion, providing an opportunity for the School community to acknowledge the contributions of our graduating students and celebrate the relationships that make Wilderness such a special place. Thank you to all students and families who helped honour this tradition and make the event such a meaningful farewell for the Class of 2026.

Wait Mate Program

This week, an information session was held for the local community by Wait Mate, an

initiative that helps families work together to delay smartphone ownership and promote healthy childhood development. Wait Mate is based on the idea that childhood should be shaped by real-world experiences, relationships and connection before smartphones become part of everyday life.

Parents who join the program choose how long they would like to wait before providing their child with a smartphone and can connect with other families in the same year level who are making a similar commitment. By building a supportive community, Wait Mate helps reduce the pressure often felt by parents and young people when it comes to smartphone ownership.

Importantly, Wait Mate is not anti-technology. Instead, it encourages families to consider the timing of smartphone access and empowers communities to make informed decisions together. The program recognises that every family is different while providing a network of support for those choosing to wait.

For more information about the movement and resources available to families, visit www.waitmate.org.au.

Success at the CLTASA Awards Ceremony

We are delighted to congratulate a number of our Middle School Chinese language students who were recognised at the Chinese Language Teachers Association of South Australia (CLTASA) Annual Awards Ceremony.

Students received first, second and third place awards in the CLTASA Video Competition across a range of language learning categories. We are particularly proud of our Year 8 students, with awards presented to Farhina Sheza, Skyler Luong, Avalene Tran, Ying Yu, Cecilia Di and Laura Xiao. In addition, Skyler Luong received the Outstanding Chinese Learner Award for the Middle Years, recognising her dedication and achievement in Chinese language studies.

“On Friday 11 September, the Chinese Language Teachers Association of South Australia (CLTASA) Competition was held at Seymour College. It was a wonderful evening filled with fun, excitement and cultural celebration.

Guests enjoyed a variety of delicious food and refreshments, which added to the warm and welcoming atmosphere. Each attendee was given a named seat, and one of the highlights of the evening was the lucky raffle, giving everyone the chance to win a prize.

During the event, we were treated to a special performance by young students from Westminster School, who sang and danced for the audience, delighting everyone in attendance. Throughout the evening, we enjoyed spending time with friends, meeting other students and celebrating our shared interest in Chinese language and culture.

A particularly memorable moment was receiving our award, which was personally presented to us on stage. We also had the honour of shaking hands with the event’s

sponsors, and we were sincerely thankful for their generous support in making the competition possible.

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
(W□ men f□i cháng g□n xiè su□ y□u wèi zhè cì b□ sài fù ch□ n□ lì de rén□—□We are very grateful to everyone who worked hard to make this competition possible.)

□□□□□□□□□□□□
(Zhè zh□n shì y□ cì nán wàng de j□ng lì!□—□It was truly an unforgettable experience!)

We would also like to sincerely thank the teachers, fellow competitors, organisers, Seymour College and everyone who helped prepare the food, activities and competition.

Overall, the CLTASA Chinese Competition was a fun and meaningful occasion that we will remember for a long time and that will spur us on in our Chinese studies."

By Avalene, Ying, Farhina and Cecilia

Governor's Civics Awards Recognition

We are proud to announce that Olivia Ertugrul and Avni Katdare have been recognised as recipients of the 2026 Governor's Civics Awards for Schools.

The awards acknowledge students who demonstrate an outstanding understanding of civics, citizenship and community participation. Following consideration by the Governor's Civics Awards judging panel, Olivia and Avni were selected as award recipients and will be formally presented with their medallions and certificates at Government House in early 2027.

This recognition reflects both students' thoughtful engagement with civic issues and their commitment to making a positive contribution to their community.

Congratulations to Olivia and Avni on this significant achievement. We look forward to celebrating with them at the official presentation ceremony next year.

Australian Mathematics Competition (AMC) Results

Congratulations to our Middle School students who participated in the Australian Mathematics Competition (AMC) and achieved outstanding results across Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9.

High Distinction

- Claudia Collum (Year 7)
- Hannah Fang (Year 8)
- Alina Teng (Year 8)
- Kaitlyn Tran (Year 8)

- Ying Yu (Year 8)

Distinction

- Skye Aung (Year 7)
- Anushka Jaiveer (Year 7)
- Giordanna Russo (Year 7)
- Elizabeth Sinclair (Year 7)
- Floria Wang (Year 7)
- Olivia Zhong (Year 7)
- Mia Zhou (Year 7)
- Lila Nassery (Year 8)
- Issie Morgan (Year 9)

Credit

- Evana Arora (Year 7)
- Alexandrina Cao (Year 7)
- Olivia Ertugrul (Year 7)
- Jiarui Fan (Year 7)
- Mitakshi Gupta (Year 7)
- Van Huynh (Year 7)
- Elizabeth Jamieson (Year 7)
- Kyra Shah (Year 7)
- Iris Tiong (Year 7)
- Katherine Xue (Year 7)
- Nithyasri Yazhini Dhachina (Year 8)

- Matilda Doolan (Year 8)
- Noor Jilaihawi (Year 8)
- Sharanya Reddy (Year 8)
- Maryam Cedra Sawad (Year 8)
- Addy Wilson (Year 8)
- Laura Xiao (Year 8)
- Zara Davuluru (Year 9)
- Hiteejot Grewal (Year 9)
- Genevieve Lim (Year 9)
- Hazel Newman (Year 9)
- Annabel Ryder (Year 9)
- Ella Wu (Year 9)

Congratulations to all students on their dedication, perseverance and achievement in this year's competition. Their results reflect both strong mathematical thinking and a willingness to challenge themselves through participation in one of Australia's most respected mathematics competitions.

Jessica Ryder Sets New Archery Records

Year 8 student Jessica Ryder has achieved remarkable success at the 2026 Archery Australia National Indoor Championships, held in August.

Competing in the Under 14 Female Longbow division, Jessica was crowned both State and National Champion. Even more impressively, she set a new Australian Under 14 Female Indoor Record, which also established new State records in the Under 14, Under 16 and Under 18 categories.

Jessica's performance was exceptional, with scores surpassing those of all male longbow competitors in the Under 14, Under 16 and Under 18 divisions. Her achievement is a testament to her commitment, skill and countless hours of training.

We congratulate Jessica on this outstanding accomplishment and wish her continued success in her archery journey.

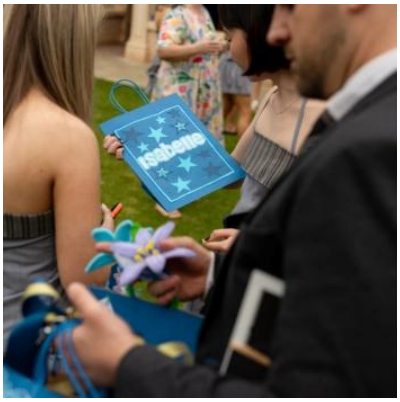
Young Virtuoso Award Selection

Congratulations also to Jessica Mah, who has been selected to compete in the 2026 5MBS Young Virtuoso Award South Australia.

The prestigious event showcases some of South Australia's most talented young musicians across piano, voice and violin. Jessica's selection reflects her dedication to musical excellence and highlights the breadth of talent within our Middle School community.









SENIOR SCHOOL

Celebrating the Class of 2026

Kate Hanson

This term has been one of reflection and celebration for our Year 12 students as they concluded their time at Wilderness with a series of events recognising their contributions to the School, culminating in the Valedictory Dinner.

Throughout the year, the Class of 2026 has embraced the SRC theme of Bloom. The theme has reflected the growth and development of the girls as they have navigated their final year, taken on new responsibilities and contributed to the life of the School. Their individual achievements, leadership and involvement in the wider community have been a source of pride.

The Walk of Honour was a particularly special occasion, bringing together students and staff to farewell our Year 12s. It was an opportunity to acknowledge the connections formed throughout their time at Wilderness and the contribution they have made to our community.

This year's Valedictory Dinner continued the theme of Bloom, with beautiful poppy imagery providing the backdrop for the evening. We were also pleased to be joined by the Year 12 teachers and staff who have supported the girls throughout their final year. Their guidance, encouragement and commitment have been greatly appreciated.

As our Year 12 students prepare for their upcoming examinations, we wish them every success. We look forward to seeing the paths they pursue beyond Wilderness and the contributions they will make to their communities. Although their time as students has come to an end, Wilderness will remain a place of connection and belonging, a community that will continue to welcome them home.

SRC Changeover

At the beginning of the term, we held our annual SRC Changeover Assembly, where we thanked the outgoing 2026 SRC and welcomed the incoming 2027 student leaders.

We thank the 2026 SRC for their commitment and leadership throughout the year. Their theme of Bloom has provided a focus for a range of initiatives and events, encouraging students to participate in and contribute to the life of the School.

The incoming 2027 SRC has already begun planning for the year ahead, including the development of their theme and preparations for the SRC Big Lunch. We look forward to supporting them as they take on their new responsibilities.

Uniform Expectations

As we begin the final term, I would like to remind families of the importance of supporting our School's uniform and presentation expectations. We appreciate the role parents and caregivers play in ensuring that students arrive at school appropriately dressed and ready for the day.

In particular, we ask families to pay attention to expectations regarding nails and jewellery. Nail polish is not permitted, including pale pink shades. Students are permitted to wear only one simple stud or sleeper in each ear lobe. Girls will be asked to remove helix and other piercings.

Consistency in these expectations is important, and we appreciate your support in reinforcing them at home. This helps minimise the need for reminders during the school day and allows staff and students to focus on teaching and learning. Thank you for your continued support as we approach the end of the school year.










Amaryllis
FAREWELL
BREAKFAST







BOARDING

A Whirlwind of Celebrations

Bronwen Pluck

The start of Term 4 has flown by in a whirlwind of celebrations for our Year 12s and the wider Boarding House community.

The Year 12 girls enjoyed their final Boarding House outing together. The afternoon began with a trip to Pandora in the city, where they designed and engraved their Boarding Leavers bracelets. Each girl contributed a letter to create the message "Boarders 2026", which was then engraved onto every bracelet, creating a meaningful keepsake and lasting reminder of their time together in the Boarding House. We then headed to Glenelg for a relaxed picnic-style dinner on the beach, providing a wonderful opportunity for the girls to reflect on their boarding journey and celebrate together.

We recently gathered for our final whole-house dinner of 2026, celebrating our Year 12 students at the annual Boarding Leavers Dinner. It is always a special evening, filled with a mix of emotion, reflection and celebration as we farewell our graduating boarders. The speeches delivered by the girls were thoughtful, heartfelt and beautifully presented, highlighting the friendships, memories and experiences that have shaped their time in boarding. It was also wonderful to share the evening with the girls' teachers, Heads of House and Heads of School, who have all played an important role in supporting their journey throughout the years.

The Mary Home House Cup competition for 2026 has officially come to an end, with the Edwin Family crowned this year's winners. It has been a fantastic year of competition, community and plenty of fun, with activities ranging from dance-offs and Minute to Win It games to making sandwiches for KickStart for Kids and much more. We wrapped up the year's competition by coming together for supper and enjoying Edwin-themed teal

cupcakes as we celebrated another successful year of house spirit and participation.









OSHC

Summer Vacation Care at Wilderness OSHC

Bec Vandermoer

Wilderness OSHC Vacation Care Program
December 2026 & January 2027

Get ready for a summer full of fun, adventure, creativity and unforgettable memories at Wildy OSHC.

From exciting excursions and special incursions to themed days, creative activities and plenty of opportunities to play, explore and connect with friends, we have a fantastic summer program planned for everyone.

Ready to book?

To secure your child's place, please click the link below and register through **FullyBooked**:

https://wildyoshc.fullybookedccms.com.au/family/login

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to give us a call on **0427 561 738** or pop into the OSHC room. We're always happy to help.

We can't wait to share a fun-filled summer break with you all.

The Wildy OSHC Team